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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1299  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3340  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2726  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP  
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000235

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN (GORKOWSKI)

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SUBJECT: KYRGYZ OPPOSITION PLANS NATIONWIDE PROTESTS FOR  
MARCH 27

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Classified By: Ambassador Tatiana C. Gfoeller, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The United People's Movement (UPM), a new opposition umbrella organization, plans to hold nationwide protests beginning on March 27. Opposition leaders warn against government provocation during the protests, and the government promises to deal firmly with even "a minor violation of the law." The UPM is currently planning for only one day of protests, but might decide to extend them, and they expect the protests to be "repressed in a very cruel manner." One opposition member claimed that Medet Sadrykulov's apparent murder has brought a number of Ak Jol members and government officials into contact with the opposition. The activist claimed that "unending persecution" was bringing the disparate opposition together, at least on the point that Bakiyev should go. But the question of who should replace him is another matter. END SUMMARY.

A Day of Protests, Maybe More  
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¶2. (SBU) The United People's Movement (UPM) announced on March 14 that it would hold nationwide protests beginning on March 27. Azimbek Beknazarov, the head of the UPM, said that protests will continue "until they reach their successful end." Opposition leaders have framed the protests as a response to the government's campaign of intimidation and prosecution against opposition members, and demand President Bakiyev's resignation. They have also warned of possible government provocation during the protests, and announced that the gatherings would be held in accordance with the Constitution and without any violation of the law. In response, Interior Minister Moldomusa Kongantiyev promised that the police would take appropriate measures to deal with even "a minor violation of the law."

¶3. (C) Opposition party activist Bolot Alymkulov of the Ak Shumkar Party told Poloff that contrary to Beknazarov's announcement, the UPM is currently planning for only one day of protests, but that they might decide to extend them, depending on the situation after the first day. The protests

will last for four to five hours, and will take place in Talas, Naryn, Toktogul, Jalalabad, and Osh, in addition to Bishkek. Alymkulov said that the opposition expects the protests to be "repressed in a very cruel manner."

#### Sadyrkulov's Death Pushing People Off the Fence

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14. (C) Reflecting on the wider political situation, Alymkulov said that Medet Sadrykulov's apparent murder has forced a number of people who were sitting on the fence to come down on the side of the opposition. As a result, the opposition is in contact with an increasing number of Ak Jol members and government officials. In addition to former Vice Prime Minister Elmira Ibraimova, who is openly attending opposition gatherings, Alymkulov said they have been talking with Ak Jol MPs Galina Kulikova and Zaidin Kulmanov. He also implied that they were in frequent contact with Ak Jol Deputy Eric Arsaliev, the Chair of the International Relations Committee and a Sadyrkulov ally. He declined to give any additional names, but said that there were many former Bakiyev loyalists changing sides, and that for now, the opposition's advice to them is to maintain their positions and their silence.

#### Opposition Becoming More Radical

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15. (C) According to Alymkulov, the government's political persecution -- unending legal harassment and prosecutions, the jailing of former Foreign Minister Alikbek Jekshenkulov, and Sadyrkulov's death -- is causing the opposition to become both more radical, and stronger: There are now more people

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in the opposition who are willing to consider the use of force, and, Alymkulov claimed, the unrelenting government pressure has closed many fissures in the ranks. The primary constraint for the opposition continues to be financial resources, but beyond that limitation, Alymkulov said that there was general and strong agreement on the need to oust Bakiyev.

16. (C) However, with the next breath, Alymkulov admitted that the opposition's unanimity does not really extend so much as a day past the overthrow of Bakiyev. Jockeying for position within the opposition ranks continues, and Alymkulov indicated that he believes Temir Sariyev, the head of his own Ak Shumkar party, is contributing more "human resources" to the opposition movement than any other party, strengthening his claim to leadership. Alymkulov also said that the Social Democratic Party remains strongly engaged in the unified opposition, but that their leader, Alikbek Atambayev, is not, and has indicated his lack of enthusiasm for the opposition's plans.

17. (C) Alymkulov said that both he and his father have been called into the prosecutor's office for questioning, in both cases on extremely flimsy pretexts, and that police searched the houses of Temir Sariyev's brother-in-law, and his chief accountant. Also, the financial police are investigating Sariyev's business. Many opposition members, including Cholpon Jakupova, a longstanding Embassy contact, are receiving late-night phone calls threatening their lives.

#### Another Account of Sadyrkulov's Death

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18. (C) Alymkulov said that according to his contacts in the government, the forensic examination showed that Sadyrkulov was first murdered, then burned, and that the individual who supposedly hit Sadyrkulov's car has a criminal record, and during his interrogation could offer no account of how the accident happened. In opposition circles, Sadyrkulov's death is taken as evidence of President Bakiyev's weakening control over his brother, Janysh, who is thought to control the

security services, and have extensive ties with local criminal organizations. According to Aylmkulov, President Bakiyev did not know about the planned assassination ahead of time, and was badly shaken by it. Maxim, the President's son, reportedly increased his security immediately after news of the incident broke.

Comment

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19. (C) Aylmkulov compared the post-Sadyrkulov political situation to an incipient avalanche, which might resist collapse for years, or might be touched off by the slightest shock. There is little doubt that Sadyrkulov's apparent murder shocked a great many of the Kyrgyz political elite, and may have caused some of them to reconsider their loyalties, but as yet we see no indication that Sadyrkulov's death reverberates with the population of Kyrgyzstan to the degree that it will drive them to the street.  
GFOELLER